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ABSTRACT

Adapted from a curriculum guide prepared by the Hartford, Connecticut Bilingual Program's Vocabulary Development Committee, this guide to vocabulary development in sheltered English offers practical ideas for content area instruction to limited-English-speaking students in the language classroom, with the objective of facilitating transition from the English-as-a-second-language or bilingual classroom to English-only, mainstream instruction. The approach is based on research in first and second language development and the interaction of this research with school achievement. The guide provides background information on the concept and practice of sheltered instruction, vocabulary development through concepts, and the teacher's role in sheltered English. Two units on lesson planning follow, with lesson activities that illustrate these principles. The first, a science unit on the moon and gravity, provides information for the teacher on the role of sheltered English in science instruction, outlines components of a sheltered English lesson, suggests steps in developing and teaching a lesson, and contains a lesson outline based on these principles. The second focuses on commonalities in the organizational structure of social studies and science. It outlines steps in producing a unit integrating teaching on the cell and teaching about government and discusses the identification of common elements in the seemingly disparate subjects. A lesson outline for using this topic with eighth graders is provided. (MSE)

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This Program Information Guide was adapted from a curriculum guide produced by the Hartford Bilingual Program's Vocabulary Development Committee in June 1986. The title of that guide was "Second Language Acquisition through Vocabulary Development Via Concepts: A Guidebook." Authors of the guide were:

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Preface

Program Information Guides are based on locally developed curriculum materials submitted to NCBE by practitioners involved in the education of language minority/limited English proficient students. These Guides provide practical information on current and innovative teaching practices in bilingual education and in the education of limited English proficient students. All guides in this series include sample lesson plans and classroom activities.

NCBE Program Information Guides reflect topic areas frequently requested by practitioners. We invite all practitioners who may be in the process of developing or who may have already developed curriculum materials for use with language minority/limited English proficient children to send these materials to us at NCBE. Materials received will be reviewed for accession into our computerized database and will be considered for future publication.

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Introduction

This Program Information Guide offers practical ideas for providing instruction to the limited English proficient (LEP) student using a sheltered English approach. The aim of this guide is to facilitate transition of these students from special language instruction, either English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual education, to English-only, mainstream instruction by providing content area instruction while students are still in the language classroom.

This Guide is based upon a theoretical framework found in the original guide produced by Hartford Public Schools. This framework incorporates much of the work of Jim Cummins and Stephen Krashen. Research conducted by these two linguists deals with the theoretical underpinnings of first language development and second language acquisition and of the interaction between both of these and school achievement.

The concept of Sheltered English arose from the work of Stephen Krashen (1985), whose idea that language is learned when it is delivered as "comprehensible input" set the foundation for the development of English language classes which provide content area instruction in a limited, controlled, or "sheltered" format. For input to be comprehensible, it must contain language or vocabulary already known to the student and must be acquired in meaningful contexts or situations (as opposed to language drills and exercises which focus on reinforcement of grammatical structures instead of meaning). Sheltered English also includes the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills and English language skills which enable students to learn content area material through the medium of English.

Sheltered English is a relatively new concept, and few curriculum guides exist which use this approach. This Program Information Guide represents an initial attempt by Hartford's ESL teachers in developing a Sheltered English approach for their language classrooms.

Sheltered English: A Definition

Sheltered English is an approach to teaching ESL which uses English as the medium for providing content area instruction. It serves as a bridge from the ESL class to the academic mainstream. This approach differs from what native speakers of English receive in the regular all-English program (subject matter instruction in English) in that Sheltered English provides content area instruction to LEP students while emphasizing development of their English language skills (Savitt 1985, Krashen 1985, Parker 1985, Guzman 1986). This relatively new approach reflects the latest research developments on second language acquisition.

The integration of second language acquisition and content or subject matter learning has been given considerable attention by psycholinguistic and pedagogical researchers in this decade. Research suggests that:

1. A second language is not acquired by direct instruction in the rules of the language, but by using language in meaningful contexts (Krashen 1982).

2. Students will acquire a second language only if they receive comprehensible input in it. Talk becomes comprehensible to students through context and reference to background knowledge (Krashen 1985) or context-embedded and cognitively undemanding experiences (Cummins 1981, 1984).

3. Talk is not enough. To succeed in school, LEP students need more than conversational fluency; they need to develop the cognitive and academic skills required for learning academic subject matter (Cummins 1984).

This research supports the idea that instead of teaching language skills in isolation from subject matter, educators should:

1. Try to integrate language development with content learning.

2. Make good use of our students' background knowledge and experiences.

3. In time, focus on the development of higher-level academic skills.

Reflecting research findings, Sheltered English classes provide instruction through context-embedded experiences. That is, meaning is conveyed not through language alone but with the help of gestures, body language, visual aids, demonstrations, and hands-on experiences. Sheltered English activities provide immediate and concrete referents in which learning of curricular subjects and English occur simultaneously. They are real subject matter lessons made comprehensible for the LEP student. The focus of instruction and testing (evaluation) is on the subject matter itself, not on the language. Sheltered English instruction stresses comprehension and production (both oral and written). The goal is to produce students who can read and write well enough to function in the mainstream English-only classroom. (Guzman 1986).

Principles operating in the Sheltered English classroom include the following:

1. The focus is on meaning rather than on form. There is no overt error correction.

2. Linguistic modifications, such as simplified or caretaker speech and controlled vocabulary and sentence length are used.

3. Subject matter concepts are presented using contextual clues, such as demonstrations, experiments, and map activities, to help convey meaning.

4. Conversational interaction is interesting and relevant to the students.

5. Students are allowed a pre-speech stage or silent period and do not have to speak until they are ready (Krashen and Terrell 1983, Krashen 1984, 1985).

Subjects which lend themselves to instruction with contextual clues would be the first to be introduced through Sheltered English. These would include science experiments and social studies projects.

Vocabulary Development via Concepts

The teaching of vocabulary aids the transition from ESL or bilingual education instruction to mainstream classes by providing students with basic tools for talking about subjects such as math, social studies, or science. Providing lessons in content area vocabulary development gives LEP students a headstart on concepts introduced in English-only classrooms. Presenting content area vocabulary lessons in context, by teaching actual lessons in math, social studies, or science, develops students' academic competence or ability to function in the mainstream (Ramos-Ocasio 1985, Savitt 1985, Zalatimo 1985).

Activities for the development of English language skills needed to function in English-only classrooms should not emphasize language forms and functions alone. They should aim for facilitating content area instruction through instruction in concept-based vocabulary. Concept based vocabulary permits students to focus on key words, to interpret the meaning of sentences produced by the teacher, and to continue the general language acquisition process by requiring them to interact and discuss subject matter. Through this interaction, both grammar and vocabulary are developed, and this process promotes English acquisition in a context-embedded, cognitively demanding activity (Piskor 1985, 1986).

Integrating Second Language Instruction and Content Area Objectives

Instead of teaching about language structures, Sheltered English activities develop language skills through subject matter instruction. Mohan (1986) proposes three areas to consider in planning Sheltered English lessons: the topic, the student's experience, and the student's cognitive skills.

Topics. To the language teacher, topics are thought of as "themes"; to the content teacher, topics are called "subject matter."

The student's experience. Students learn not only through textbooks and teacher lectures but also through hands-on experiences. For example, science classes provide laboratory work in addition to lectures. ESL classes draw on all kinds of demonstrations, realia, films, and hands-on activities.

Cognitive skills. Students are asked to engage in higher-level thinking in the content area classroom. For example, classroom activities involve questioning and problem-posing techniques, reading and analyzing textbooks, and writing out ideas in response to what has been read and learned in the classroom.

Mohan stresses that in developing Sheltered English activities, teachers should begin by providing students with information in the context in which it appears. Teachers can do this by guiding students in describing, classifying, and evaluating information presented in the ESL classroom; by drawing on their personal and hands-on experiences; and by using content area material as a catalyst for language learning.

Sheltered English classes are characterized by the use of hands-on or

student-centered activities that develop academic language skills. Instructional activities reflect the same content as a regular mainstream course in the particular content area. This requires the cooperation of content area teachers in developing the Sheltered English lesson. Activities should integrate the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Suggestions for doing this in the Sheltered English lesson follow:

Listening Skill Development. To acquire new and technical vocabulary and language in content classes, teachers need to provide a great deal of comprehensible input often and through various strategies. Sheltered English classes should employ audio-visual equipment (tape recorder, filmstrip projector, overhead projector, slide projector, and video recorders) that can easily be used by the teacher in presenting activities which promote comprehension.

Whenever new material is presented, pacing should be slower than when material is being reviewed. The objective of the Sheltered English class should be to provide clues and reinforce comprehension of the main concepts and vocabulary covered in a lesson. Teachers can use charts, graphs, and word banks of technical vocabulary to make subject matter meaningful (Acosta 1985). Basic techniques can be used to enhance comprehension: enunciating clearly, using controlled vocabulary and sentence length, and explaining idiomatic expressions. Contextual clues -- use of gestures and facial expressions, acting out meaning, and providing props and visuals -- all contribute to further clarification of the meaning of the content.

Speaking. Discussion among students can be promoted by engaging students in small group activities which include problem-solving, performing science experiments, making maps, and preparing skits. With the classroom set up for student interaction, a higher noise level is to be expected. Also, the activity the students are expected to carry out should be demonstrated and modeled by the teacher (Acosta 1985).

Reading. Sheltered English reading activities should be conducted with materials at low readability levels that have been simplified for LEP students. Students need to be guided in organizing their thoughts in a way that enables them to retrieve information and recap the essence of a topic or theme. Semantic mapping, an alternative to linear note-taking, allows students to visualize the complete structure of a passage and the interrelationship of ideas. Mapping techniques are illustrated in Sample Activity 1.

Writing. Writing activities in the Sheltered English class are aimed at reinforcing retention of the main points of a content area lesson. For example, students can be asked to summarize the most salient aspects of what they have read or discussed in narrative form. Dictation involving recall of main events occurring in a sequence may be useful. Once students have demonstrated a basic comprehension of the material, interpretive and evaluative (deeper cognitive) questions may be asked.

Role of the Teacher

Ideally, the teacher of Sheltered English is one who is prepared to provide instruction in the content subjects of the curriculum and in English as a second language (Saville-Troike 1984, Acosta 1985, Mohan 1986). Elementary school teachers often teach all subjects in the curriculum. When ESL training and experience is added to their preparation, they readily develop the expertise to provide Sheltered English instruction. Therefore,

close collaboration is needed between ESL and content area teachers in planning, teaching, and evaluating activities that develop both the academic language skills and concept formation of their LEP students (Savitt 1985, Ramos-Ocasio 1985).

Sheltered English instruction can become an integral part of the whole school curriculum -- the link between the ESL or bilingual program and mainstream classes. As such, the entire school community can become involved in the implementation of Sheltered English instruction. This collaboration is especially essential for the success of ESL or bilingual programs, which all too often are taught in isolation from content areas. Sheltered English instruction can provide the merging point on the road to successful school experience, a place where the positive forces of the school can come together in a mutual effort to provide quality education for language minority students.

Sample Lessons and Activities

To illustrate the principles of Sheltered English instructional strategies, two Sheltered English instructional activities are presented in this guide. The first is a science lesson entitled Solar System: Moon and Gravity (Spudic 1986). The second one is a science and social studies activity entitled Identifying Commonalties in Organizational Structure (George, Guzman, and Rivas 1986).

The sample activities presented here are designed to allow for optimum language acquisition via content based vocabulary. They attempt to meet the requirements of useful input in the following ways:

1. They are comprehensible. Lessons are presented in an understandable manner at the level of the students.

2. They are interesting and relevant. Motivation is high and the affective filter (defensive mechanisms) is low in a context-embedded, cognitively demanding class.

3. They are not grammatically sequenced. The goal is clarity, regardless of the type of structures used. As long as the students are exposed to the language, understand it, and are motivated to interact with their teacher and peers, there is no need to be bound to a specific grammatical sequence. The goal is to develop deeper cognitive and linguistic levels of academic proficiency through meaningful, content based vocabulary.

4. They are sufficient in quantity. Although it is difficult to determine just how much is enough, these lessons are intended to present meaningful vocabulary that goes a little bit beyond the students' understanding of the lessons. They consist of previously mastered language as well as new material.

Sample Lesson 1
Solar System: Moon and Gravity

The Role of Sheltered English in Science Education

Science is an area of the school curriculum which can easily be used to combine the acquisition of English and critical thinking skills. As a subject which requires problem-solving skills, science can be used to encourage content knowledge (Krashen 1984, 1985).

There are presently no textbooks for teaching science concepts in a Sheltered English environment. Although many science textbooks present important science concepts in simple language, further simplification of structures and vocabulary is necessary for LEP students.

Components of a Sheltered English Lesson

All instruction is in English and is adjusted so that the lesson is comprehensible to the students in the following ways:

1. It is simplified to ensure comprehension. When giving explanations and directions, simple sentences are used with a set of already developed standard directions. In this way, students can concentrate on the content of the lesson rather than on the lesson procedures. Although the teacher should speak at his/her normal rate of speech, the pauses between sentence boundaries (i.e., where there would be a comma, period, or question mark if speech were written down) can be lengthened slightly.

2. Vocabulary is controlled. The science lesson focuses on vocabulary relating to the moon, but the focus is not teaching a vocabulary list. Rather, the emphasis is on the content, with the possibility of allowing students to generate vocabulary list.

3. Emphasis is on the development of reading, writing, and thinking skills. Students need to develop these skills to compete in the mainstream classroom. Activities such as note-taking, report writing, independent projects, and textbook reading are important and should be introduced using a simplified approach. This may require the teaching of study skills.

Developing a Sheltered English Lesson

Most suggestions given here for developing a Sheltered English science lesson can be adapted for other kinds of Sheltered English lessons. Steps to developing a Sheltered English lesson are as follows:

1. Study the mainstream curriculum and textbooks and consult with mainstream teachers as to what they think are the most important units, vocabulary, and skills needed for successful completion of a course of study (e.g., math, science, social studies).

2. Identify key concepts and vocabulary needed to teach each lesson. Keep in mind that the mainstream curriculum may include vocabulary the LEP student may not yet possess. This vocabulary should be introduced in the lesson.

3. Select activities and resource materials that demonstrate the vocabulary and concepts to be taught. The mainstream text, the school library, and the mainstream teacher are all sources for materials and ideas.

4. Construct a semantic map by representing topics and subtopics as branches radiating out from the central theme or topic. Semantic mapping is a form of graphic organization which can be used as a tool in helping students organize thoughts, retrieve information, and recap the essence of a topic or theme.

Teaching a Sheltered English Lesson

A possible outline for teaching a Sheltered English lesson might include the following steps:

Brainstorm. Brainstorming is a technique that can be used to stimulate interest and discussion in the science classroom. Students share all the information they already know about the concept proposed while the teacher writes their contributions on the blackboard. For example, the question "What do you know about the moon?" may stimulate some students to make statements like the following:

"Well, it's up to the sky."
"Changes."
"Gets skinny."
"Moves around in orbits."
"It's cold."
"It lights up the sky at night."
"It's all rock, no air."

When asking students to answer questions or give explanations orally, teachers should listen to what they are saying rather than to English language errors. If the content of an answer is correct, although incorrectly expressed, teachers should accept the response and praise the student for knowing the right answer. They can then restate the student's answer or explanation to model the correct language. The student has to hear the correct form many times before being able to reproduce it accurately. In content subjects such as science, it is more important that the students understand the concept being taught rather than that they correct their performance errors.

Use visuals to focus on the topic. A variety of concrete objects and visual aids is a necessity for a context-embedded lesson. For the lesson on the moon, use slides of the first landing on the moon and ask students to describe what they see. This should generate vocabulary building.

Provide Hands-On Experiences. Students need hands-on experiences to verify information and discover more about a subject. Hands-on experiences allow them to practice skills of observation, inference, prediction, comparison, and classification.

Some simple hands-on activities might include:

1. Using a projector or lamp (the sun) and a tennis ball (the moon), demonstrate how the shape of the moon appears to change. Have the students sit in a small circle. Move the "moon" around the circle in the light of the "sun." Discuss the different shapes of the shadow.

2. Listen to the audio tape while reading along in the booklet provided in *Wonders of Learning. The Earth's Moon* (Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 1981). Do this more than once, stopping at appropriate times to check for understanding.

3. Use photos or sketches to describe phases of the moon. Write vocabulary on the board and discuss.

4. Demonstrate the effects of gravity. Jump 2 or 3 times. Why do we fall? What happens when we drop things? Discuss gravity of the moon and how it affects the tides. Have students record definitions of gravity in their notebooks.

5. Review test vocabulary and concepts with worksheets and questioning games.

Read the actual lesson. At the end of the lesson or unit, borrow the textbooks from the mainstream classroom and have the students read the lesson or unit together. This has proven to be stimulating and successful because the students are comfortable with the vocabulary and the ideas, and they know what they are going to read before they read it.

Test. The focus of the Sheltered English class is on content material. Therefore, forms of review or testing should focus on the concepts and vocabulary acquired, not on grammar. At this level, evaluations of the student's performance can be done orally, in the form of a game, a written test, or an independent project such as a labeled drawing of a moon colony.

Lesson Outline
Solar System: The Moon and Gravity

1. Content and language areas involved

Subject	Content	Language Skills	Grammar
Science	Earth Science Solar System Reading Writing	Listening Speaking	Nouns Verbs Adjectives Adverbs Affixes

2. Student Population

4th and 5th grade LEP students

3. Skills being developed

Reading	Note-taking	Recall
Writing	Report Writing	Application
	Independent Projects	Analysis
	Learning Strategies	Synthesis
	Linguistic Mapping	Evaluation

4. Key Vocabulary

Moon	Reflect
Satellite	Gravity
Phases	Force
Shadow	Craters

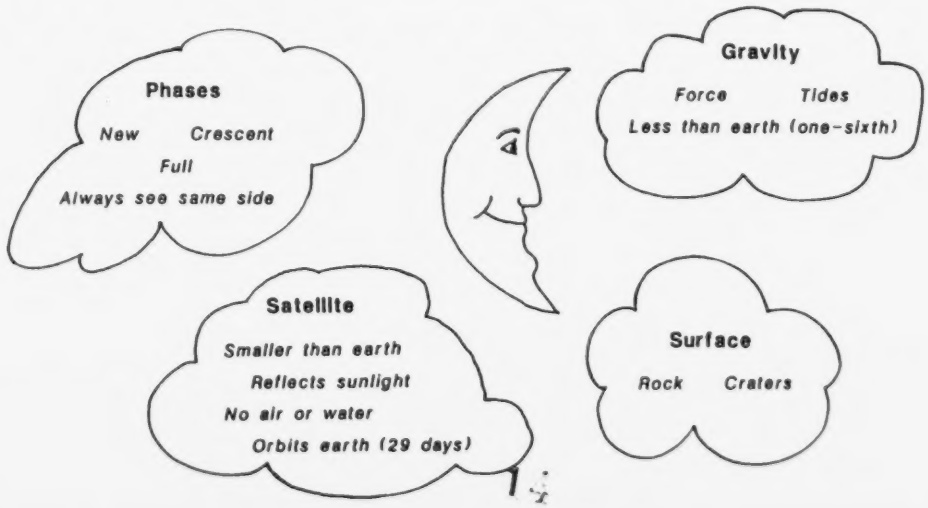
New, Full, Crescent Moon

5. Key Concepts

The moon is a satellite to earth.
The moon appears to change but it is moving in and out of sunlight.
It reflects sunlight.
It has no air or water.
It is smaller than earth.
Its gravity causes the tides.

6. Semantic mapping

Organization and interrelationships of ideas can be represented graphically using key vocabulary and concepts as follows:



Sample Lesson 2
Social Studies and Science: Identifying Commonalities in Organizational Structures

This lesson is an initial attempt to develop an integrative unit aimed at concept development and reinforcement in science and social studies. The social studies unit is entitled "A New Nation" and covers the struggle for independence and the birth of the United States as a nation. The science unit is entitled "The Cell" and introduces the parts of a cell and their organization. The goal in Sheltered English is to link the two subject areas by identifying similarities and parallels between the organizational structures of these two topics. In doing this, students are guided in seeing interrelationships and drawing conclusions between two content areas which they might otherwise consider to be exclusive of each other. Additional reinforcement of these ideas within other disciplines (English, Spanish, math, and reading) may facilitate comprehension as well.

Developing a Sheltered English Unit

The following steps can be taken in producing a Sheltered English unit which integrates teaching on the cell and an unit of government.

1. Concepts and themes from the two content areas (science and social studies) are listed.
2. Material from each discipline relating to the concepts is collected.
3. Interrelated vocabulary lists from the two disciplines which take into account such details as work roots, prefixes, infixes, and suffixes and include synonyms and antonyms are produced.
4. Activities are developed which link the data presented in each discipline.
5. Discussion topics that connect the disciplines are presented.
6. Supplementary materials that tie the disciplines together are identified (i.e. audio-visual aids, bulletin boards).

Identifying Common Elements

Two subjects that may seem not to relate on the surface can be linked to each other and common elements can be found by describing the parallel organizational structures between them. For example, social studies and science can be related by pointing out common units of organization. The following figure illustrates this parallel comparison:

Social Studies	Science
Individual	Cell
Family	Cells
Community	Tissue
States	Organ
Nation	System
Global Community	Organism

In social studies:

1. An individual could survive alone, but needs other as a social being and becomes part of a family.
2. Many families work and live together to form a community.
3. Communities with similar goals and aspirations form states.
4. Many states form a political unit called a nation.
5. Nations try to live as one within a global community.

In science, the units of organization are similar:

1. All living things are made of cells. The cell is the basic unit of life.
2. Cells that look alike and work together constitute a tissue.
3. Different tissues working together make up an organ.
4. Various organs coordinate their jobs and make up a system.
5. Many systems help each other out in an organism.

The organization of the cell can be taken even further. An organism is a member of a species. Various species with some common characteristics form a genus, and different genera with some common characteristics make up a family. This hierarchy continues as follows: family to order, order to class, class to phylum, and phylum to kingdom.

Lesson Outline
Social Studies and Science: Identifying Commonalities in Organizational Structures

1. Content and Language Areas Involved

Subject	Content	Language Skills	Grammar
Social Studies Science	Government Biology	Reading	Nouns Verbs Adjectives Adverbs Affixes

2. Student Population

   8th grade LEP Students

3. Key Vocabulary and Concepts

   Time and Space:
   - motion
   - tenses
   - growth
   - measurement
   - boundaries

   Consciousness:
   - safety
   - cause and effect
   - responsibility
   - self and group awareness
   - actual and potential

   Physics and Metaphysics:
   - natural versus supernatural
   - math
   - science
   - religion
   - senses

   Classification:
   - organization
   - systems
   - societies
   - groupings (want versus need)

   Nature:
   - culture
   - custom
   - tradition
   - fact - knowledge
   - opinion

Conclusion

Sheltered English classes are content-embedded and cognitively demanding. That is, English is used as a medium of instruction with the aid of extralinguistic cues such as gestures, demonstrations, and realia. Sheltered English concentrates on developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and literacy skills. Meaning is actively negotiated by linguistic modifications, such as controlled vocabulary and sentence length, and by providing abundant contextual clues such as demonstrations, experiments, and hands-on activities.

Instructional activities need to be designed to allow for optimal language acquisition via content based vocabulary. These activities need to focus on contextualization through visuals, realia, and interactional activities that help bridge basic communicative language to academic language.

There is no consensus on exactly when to place the LEP student in a Sheltered English class. Research, however, points to an intermediate level where LEP students have already acquired some basic conversational English.

Vocabulary development via concepts plays a dominant role in Sheltered English instruction. Vocabulary is basic to understanding and expressing meaning and it can serve as a bridge between basic communication skills and academic language proficiency. Focusing on subject matter vocabulary through concept formation with the appropriate meaning-based teaching methodology can help develop academic competence. It permits students to focus on key words, interpret the meaning of sentences produced by the teacher, and continue with the general acquisition process.

Close collaboration is essential between ESL and bilingual education teachers and mainstream staff in planning, teaching, and evaluating activities that develop both the academic language skills and content area knowledge of their LEP students.

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